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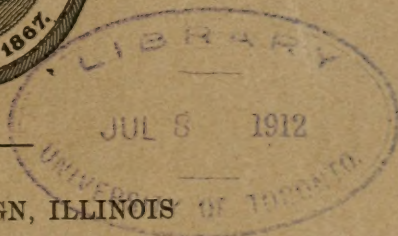
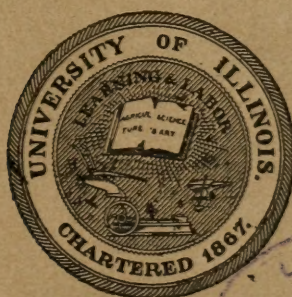
### SOME FACTS IN PARTIAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE SO-CALLED DOGMA OF FORMAL DISCIPLINE

Second (Revised) Edition

BY

STEPHEN S. COLVIN

Professor of Psychology, University of Illinois



URBANA-CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY





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SOME FACTS IN PARTIAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE  
SO-CALLED DOGMA OF FORMAL DISCIPLINE

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## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This paper substantially as printed was read before the Illinois School Masters' Club at Peoria, Oct. 8, 1909. On the following morning the question of formal discipline was discussed, President David Felmley of the Illinois State Normal University, leading. There seemed to be a substantial agreement that transfer of training was possible to a greater or less degree, and that it was best accomplished by making the habit set up a conscious end of action. President Felmley disagreed with the speaker of the previous evening chiefly on two points: (1) That a "generalized" habit was possible and (2) That pure science had a superior value to applied science. In the light of President Felmley's discussion these two topics in the paper have been slightly amplified. Otherwise the paper is printed as read.

University of Illinois, Nov. 15, 1909.

## PREFATORY STATEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION

This second edition of Bulletin No. 2 of the School of Education, has been changed in some particulars from the first, principally by the addition of a section on Recent Theoretical Discussions Relating to the Problem of Formal Discipline.

University of Illinois, April 15, 1910.



## I. THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

In the early years of the nineteenth century Gall and his pupil Spurzheim gave to the world the *Anatomie et physiologie du système nerveux*, in which is to be found a detailed exposition of Gall's System of Phrenology. According to this system the brain is supposed to contain more than thirty separate and individual organs which are the seat of the most complex psychic capacities, or internal senses, such as combativeness, the fear-of-God, a sense-of-fact, the impulse-of-self-preservation, philoprogenitiveness, and the sense-of-language. It was only an incident to this system that the locality of these internal senses was found on the surface of the brain, and that the external evidence for them existed in certain prominences on the skull. The interest in this now bizarre theory lies as far as this discussion is concerned, in the fact that here we find in a most pronounced form two basal assumptions, one of which has served as a convenient vehicle for the justification of the dogma of formal discipline, while the other lies, in part at least, at the basis of the theories of those who in their reaction against this dogma have gone in the other direction to extremes which seem equally absurd and incapable of justification. The first of these assumptions is that the mind is composed of a number of separate faculties, and from this it readily followed that these can be educated in their entirety and made to serve in the various situations of life equally well for all purposes. The second assumption has looked upon the various activities of the nervous system, particularly of the cortex, as highly specialized and definitely localized, and has viewed the corresponding psychic functions as something quite discrete and separate. Carried to its logical extreme it would seem to imply that, for example, there is not only a cortical centre for language, but a distinct area for nouns, or for verbs, or what not; not only a cortical centre for vision, but a definite area for color; then why not for all the thirty-two thousand color qualities which the eye can sense? There seems to be no limit to the multiplication of centres which can result from such a theory, and it surely serves as a firm foundation for the doctrine that there is no education in general, and that the best we can do is to train the individual to interpret a certain number of definite

sense stimuli and to respond to a limited number of concrete situations in the same old way. The faculty psychology assumed a number of fabulous entities which worked out the destinies of the individual, while the doctrine of absolute localization of nervous function has made the brain a machine of relatively unrelated parts and has created a doctrine of psychic atomism which is as untrue as it is impossible of practical application.

The faculty psychology of the last century is long since dead, and its resting place has almost been forgotten by the scientists of today; its ghost, however, stalks abroad among the masses, and its spirit still lives in the pedagogical theories of many an uncritical thinker. From this faculty psychology it is no far cry to the dogma of formal discipline in all its purity. The assumptions it contains are well expressed by a clergyman quoted by Professor James in the first volume of his larger *Psychology*: "As for my memory" writes the clergyman, "it has improved year by year. . . . like a gymnast's muscle". This is a favorite comparison, the likening of memory, or attention or any other supposed psychic faculty to a muscle that can be developed for any use by any kind of exercise, and that is made equally strong by rowing, or boxing, or chopping wood, provided that the exercise is vigorous enough; and having been made strong by one exercise, can be used equally well for all activities. No less a scientist than Helmholtz is quoted by Coover and Angell<sup>1</sup> as valuing particularly certain studies as a means of intellectual training, since these studies taxed "equally all the intellectual powers". Here we have the doctrine of formal discipline and its pedagogical consequence expressed definitely and clearly. The implication of Helmholtz's assumption seems to be that there are definite mental powers and that these powers can be developed in all directions by certain well-chosen studies.

Bagley in his *Educative Process*<sup>2</sup> puts the matter concretely in this way; "Certain subjects of the curriculum, if properly pursued, were believed to develop what might be termed 'generalized' habits. For example, a pupil may acquire a specific habit of producing neat papers in arithmetic. The doctrine of formal discipline assumes that if this habit is once thoroughly established, it will function equally well in connection with language and drawing; that, functioning successfully here, it cannot fail to

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<sup>1</sup>*American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XVIII, pages 328-340 (1907).

<sup>2</sup>Chapter XIII, page 203.



insure neatness of person and attire and that the habit of neatness thus ingrained upon the pupil will surely be carried into mature years."

Thus it is assumed that there is a general faculty or habit of neatness, and that this when trained by one set of exercise, will be serviceable in all the specific situations in life where neatness may be employed. Stated thus the dogma of formal discipline is absolutely untenable. There is no general faculty of neatness, nor of any mental capacity, and if there were such an entity, training it to function in one direction would not mean that it is trained equally well to function in all directions. If there were nothing more to the doctrine of formal discipline than the old faculty psychology, or the thought that training in one direction can be transferred equally well in all directions, I should not attempt even a partial justification of it here. It is quite obvious and beyond argument that training in mathematical reasoning does not necessarily mean ability to reason equally well in the affairs of every-day life; it seems certain that if I wish to increase my ability to discriminate between shades of gray, the best training is to attempt such discriminations and not, for example, to practice discriminating between intensities of sound. It is a vastly different matter to affirm, however, that training in mathematical reasoning has no effect on the other rational processes, and that as far as distinguishing shades of gray is concerned it is quite indifferent whether the person has had previous training in sensory discrimination in other fields. To affirm that when the mind is trained in one direction it is first of all trained in that direction and not in some other is one thing; to affirm, however, that the training in one direction has no influence in other directions is quite a different affair. No one, I think, would be quite so rash as to make the latter assertion; but many would believe that such a transfer of training is in most instances slight, and in some cases such a transfer is not probable, even in the slightest degree. Some seem to assume that about all that education can hope to do is to give to the pupil certain facts in a limited department of knowledge, and to habituate him to definite reactions in a circumscribed field of human activity. They seem to despair of any education in general that amounts to much. Having, however, admitted the possibility of transfer from one field to another, never mind how little, they are incapable of determining *a priori* how great this transfer may be

and what general effects it may have. Such persons may try to bring some definiteness into their conceptions as to the extent of this transfer by saying that such a transfer can take place only where there is a similar situation, and where like elements are involved; but it must be remembered that similarity and likeness are not primarily objective categories, but that they are constituted by the mind of the person who finds such similarity or likeness, and that it is never certain beforehand just where this similarity and likeness is to be found.

Such a contention can be determined only by actual tests either in life itself, or in the psychological experiment. Fortunately we have had in the last few years a considerable number of such experiments reported, and the light which they throw on the whole question of formal discipline is more illuminating than that which can be secured from a discussion of *a priori* assumptions, or 'half-baked' psychological theories. I, therefore, turn to them and call the most important of them briefly to your attention.

## II. EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE RELATING TO THE PROBLEM.

The two pieces of experimental evidence which have probably had the most influence in discrediting the doctrine of formal discipline and in over-emphasizing the opposite doctrine are those of Prof. James of two decades ago, and the more recent series inspired by Prof. Thorndike of Columbia University. James in his chapter on Memory in the larger *Psychology*<sup>3</sup> says: *All improvement of memory consists, then, in the improvement of one's habitual methods of recording facts.* By this he means to deny that there is any improvement in memory-power as such, the improvement being solely due to the method or the technique of memorizing. He then gives in a footnote a description of certain tests carried on by himself in support of his assertion. Since these tests are the first of a considerable number of later experiments conducted in a similar way, I will venture here to give a brief description of their general nature. Like those that have been undertaken later by other investigators, the essential technique of these earliest experiments consisted in giving the subject of the

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<sup>3</sup>Vol. I, page 667.



test some material to learn, thereby determining his capacity for learning as measured by a certain standard. The material for this first learning constitutes what is termed the "test series"; it is followed by a period of practice in learning some other kind of material and this second material is known as the "practice series"; this practice series is then followed by another learning of the material of the test series, and the improvement or lack of improvement over the first trials gives a measure of the effect of the practice series on the ability to learn.

To take a concrete case, James tested himself by learning on eight successive days 150 lines of Victor Hugo's 'Satyr.' He says: "The total number of minutes required for this was 131 5-6—it should be said that I had learned nothing by heart for many years. I then, working for twenty-odd minutes daily, learned the entire first book of Paradise Lost, occupying 38 consecutive days in the process". He then went back to the learning of Victor Hugo and found that while before the training he had learned at the rate of one line in 50 seconds, after the training he learned at the slower rate of one line in 57 seconds. James added that during the second learning series he was perceptibly fagged with other work, which, of course, invalidated the entire experiment.

Other persons under Professor James' direction carried on similar experiments under somewhat better conditions and the results showed a slight positive effect of the training.

These experiments are today chiefly of historical interest. They were not carried on under the strictest experimental conditions and are valuable mainly as pioneer investigations in the field. They are important also because their conclusions were given to the world with the tremendous authority that the *ipse dixit* of their author has always carried. Thus they have done much to reform the entire notion of the possibilities of memory-training and of training in general.

The second set of experiments which I have mentioned above as having had an important pedagogical consequence are those of Thorndike and Woodworth<sup>4</sup> reported under the title, The Influence of Improvement in One Mental Function upon the Efficiency of Other Functions. Tests were conducted to determine the influence of the training in the estimation of magnitudes on the ability to estimate magnitudes of the same general sort; the influ-

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<sup>4</sup>*Psychological Review*, Vol. VIII, pages 247-261; 348-395; 553-564.

ence of training in estimating weights, on the ability to estimate the weight of miscellaneous objects of similar weight; and the influence of the practice in marking words containing certain letters on the marking of words containing other letters, misspelled words, et cetera.

In these varied tests most of the subjects showed some improvement when tested after the practice series. Thorndike's general conclusion is that while there is some transfer it is not due to any "mysterious transfer of practice, to an unanalyzable property of mental functions", but rather to a transfer of identical elements from the practice series to the final test series. This transfer on the whole does not seem to be great, and its spread is limited largely to activities that closely resemble one another. Thorndike's experiments have been criticized as giving results in part at variance with his conclusions, and as lacking entirely in introspective analysis, making it difficult to interpret the true significance of the numerical results.

Another experimental study which seems to point in part to the same general conclusions as those of Thorndike and Woodworth was conducted also at Columbia University by Bair.<sup>5</sup> This experimenter made an extensive investigation and analysis of the practice curve. The writer, however, concludes that "any bit of special training also helps us to receive training in general. Any training helps us to find ourselves. It gives us a method of orientation which leaves us in our reactions not entirely at the mercy of chance even in unfamiliar situations. The experience which we get from special training gives us a general power to meet an entirely new situation with a more favorable response than had we not had this special training".

Among the earlier experiments, the transfer of training from one specific set of reactions to another was investigated under the direction of Scripture in the psychological laboratory at Yale University<sup>6</sup>. The first series of experiments considered the increase of muscular steadiness through practice in inserting a needle in a very small hole, and the transfer of this increase to the

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<sup>5</sup>Columbia University, *Contributions to Philosophy, Psychology and Education*, Vol. IX (1902).

<sup>6</sup>On the education of muscular control and power, E. W. Scripture, T. L. Smith, and Emily M. Brown, *Studies from the Yale Psychological Laboratory*. Vol. II, pages 105-114 (1894). Also research in cross-education by Walter W. Davis; *ibid*, Vol. VI, pages 6-50 (1898) and VIII, pages 64-109 (1900).



corresponding muscles of the opposite half of the body. The left hand was tested first and showed 50 per cent of correct trials, but after practice with the right hand for ten days the left hand showed 76 per cent of successes. Scripture explains these results as due primarily to a training of the attention rather than to any carrying over of skill in adjustment. Experiments on the increase of muscular power after practice showed "a steady increase in the muscular power of the right hand due to practice and also an increase in the power of the left hand due to what might be called 'indirect practice'".

Further experiments conducted by Davis under Scripture's direction on the rapidity of tapping a telegraph key, showed improvement through practice not only for the part of the body practiced but for other members as well. Experiments in strength of voluntary effort in lifting dumbbells showed a transference of the effects of practice from the right to the left arm in muscular development and endurance. Experiments in lunging at a target with a fencer's foil showed that practice with the right hand affected the left hand positively. According to Davis the results of the experiments showed not only that effects of exercise may be transferred, but also that "will power and attention are educated by physical training and that when developed by any special act they are developed for all other acts".

Later Judd<sup>7</sup> carried on a series of experiments on the effect of practice without knowledge of results.

The person tested was required to judge the length of certain lines and he was seated in such a position that his right hand and arm were entirely hidden from view by a large screen. Whatever he did with his right hand was, therefore, unseen by him. "On the left side of the screen and in full view, nine different lines were shown in succession, and he was required to place a pencil held in the unseen right hand in the direction indicated by the several lines seen before him." After this the reactor was given "fuller visual experience" with one line and an improvement at once took place in regard to this line. This improvement was found to be transferred by later tests to the other lines, but in some instances this transfer was negative. The lines that in the

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<sup>7</sup>These experiments are reported in the *Psychological Review*, Vol. IX, pages 27-30 (1902); also in a symposium on formal discipline in the *Educational Review*, June, 1908.

original series had shown an error similar to that of the line with which fuller visual experience had been obtained, showed a positive improvement in the test series, those in which the error had been in an opposite direction grew worse. In both cases, however, there were clear evidences of a transfer effect, but in the second case the transfer was negative.

In a second series of tests, geometrical figures were compared. Because of an illusion, one of these was overestimated, another underestimated. During the experiment one observer was kept in ignorance of the results, while the other was fully informed. Then the figures were reversed and a second series of tests were begun. In this the observer who knew the effect of practice adjusted himself to the new conditions. The other observer who did not know the effects showed a greater error than at any time, and was unable to improve, because, as Judd believes, the habit had now become so firmly fixed that training could no longer modify the reaction.

A similar test was later carried on with school children, who were required to hit a target placed under water. This was difficult because of the deflection of the light through refraction. In the test one group was instructed in the nature of refraction, while the others were kept in ignorance. The boys in this test who had been instructed did no better than the others, but in a second test in which the depth of the target in the water was reduced from twelve inches to four, the boys who had the theory fitted themselves quickly to the new conditions, while with the other group the errors were large and persistent. These experiments clearly show the value of a knowledge of conditions in connection with the transfer of training.

A somewhat analogous fact is brought out by Ruediger in a test reported in the *Educational Review*<sup>8</sup> for November, 1908. Ruediger's experiment was suggested by Bagley's results<sup>9</sup> with children tested at the Montana State Normal College. Bagley attempted "to determine whether the habit of producing neat papers in arithmetic will function with reference to neat written work in other studies". He states that "the results are almost startling in their failure to show the slightest improvement in language and spelling papers, although the improvement in the

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<sup>8</sup>Improvement of mental functions through ideals.

<sup>9</sup>*The Educative Process*, Chap. XIII, page 208.



arithmetic papers was noticeable from the first." Ruediger's tests were carried on for eight weeks in three different schools, all with pupils in the seventh grade. He found that when the emphasis on neatness in one subject was accompanied by talks to pupils on neatness, so that the habit was raised to clear consciousness, decided improvement was shown in subjects no more closely related than geography, arithmetic, grammar, and history. In other words, the habit was constructed into an ideal and a transfer was thus made which seemed entirely lacking when the whole procedure was on the level of the subconscious. This matter will be brought up again in a later part of the discussion.

Another important series of experiments on transfer was conducted a few years ago by Coover and Angell<sup>10</sup> on the general practice effects of special exercises. In one experiment the training series consisted in the discrimination of sound intensities, the test series in discriminating shades of gray. A clear transfer of the practice effect was shown, as was also the case in a lesser degree in a second test in which the training series consisted in sorting cards and the test series in typewriter reactions. The authors conclude from the objective results and the introspections of the subjects that the improvement consists in "divesting the essential process of the unessential factors. There is a greater habituation and more economical adaptation of attention."

Bennett reports the results of an experiment conducted at the Teacher's College (Columbia University) with sixteen children to determine the effect of discriminating between shades of blue, on the subsequent ability to discriminate between shades of other colors and of black. Decided transfer effects were indicated.

Franker<sup>11</sup> recently carried on a series of experiments on the transference of training in the psychological laboratory of the State University of Iowa. The same general methods in the use of training and practice series were employed as in the previous experiments cited.

The training series consisted in memorizing the order of four tones. The test series were eight in number as follows: (1) memory for poetry; (2) memory for the order of four shades of gray; (3) memory for the order of nine tones; (4) memory for the order of nine shades of gray; (5) memory for the order of

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<sup>10</sup>*American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XVIII, pages 328-340 (1907).

<sup>11</sup>*The Psychological Review, Monograph Supplements*, Vol. IX, No. 2, pages 56-102.

four tones; (6) memory for the order of nine geometrical figures; (7) memory for the order of nine numbers; (8) memory for the extent of arm movement. Clear indication of transfer was found, generally more marked in those cases where the test series and the practice series were similar, although it sometimes happened, as in Thorndike's experiments, that improvement was not noted in some cases where there was great similarity between the practice and test series; indeed, the practice seemed to have a negative effect. The results of the experiment did not, however, support Thorndike's contention that "improvement in any single mental function rarely brings about equal improvement in any other function, no matter how similar". In many cases Franker found that improvement was absolutely greater in amount in the test than in the training series. During the experiment the introspections of the observers were carefully recorded and they indicate that mental imagery and properly controlled attention have much to do with the transfer.

Another investigation of some importance in clearly indicating the existence of transfer is that of Winch<sup>12</sup> who gave his observers as a test series, the learning of selections from an historical reader and as a training series the committing of poetry. More than one hundred children were tested. The investigator concludes that "improvement gained by practice in memorizing one subject of instruction, is transferred to the memory work in other subjects whose nature is certainly diverse from that in which the improvement was gained". *Rotc* memory can certainly be improved.

Among minor investigations and observations bearing more or less directly on the problem may be mentioned Volkmann's<sup>13</sup> tests of a half century ago on the influence of practice on spatial discrimination. He investigated the fineness of space discrimination on the skin by means of the Weber compass and found that practice with the finger tips of the left hand increased the fineness of discrimination of the finger tips of the right hand, but not of the left fore-arm. Practice with the third phalanx increased the fineness of discrimination on the first phalanx.

Also of interest are the investigations of Urbantschisch, of Epstein and of Vogt cited by Coover and Angell<sup>14</sup>. Urbantsch-

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<sup>12</sup>*British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. II, page 284.

<sup>13</sup>*Bericht d. k. sächs. Ges. d. Wissenschaft*, 1858.

<sup>14</sup>*Op. cit.* page 328.



isch found that a sound stimulus increased the sensitivity of the subject for visual, gustatory, olfactory and tactile stimuli. Similar results are reported by Epstein in regard to the relation between auditory and visual stimuli. Vogt showed that habituation to distractions in one situation could be carried over to other fields.

A piece of work bearing less directly on the question of transfer, but yet indicating something in regard to mental correlations which may be variously interpreted, was recently conducted at the University of Illinois by H. L. Rietz and Imogene Shade<sup>15</sup>. This concerned itself with inquiring into "the facts of correlation between the efficiency of students in mathematics and their efficiency in (1) foreign languages, (2) natural science". The method of investigation may be characterized in a general way as that of Galton and Pearson. The source of the data is the records of the Registrar of the University of Illinois. The results of the investigation are, in brief, that "a high correlation exists between efficiency in mathematics and foreign languages". While the results here do not in any way indicate whether there has been a transfer of training in mathematics to the other subjects, they seem to show that studies as far apart as mathematics and foreign language evidently have many points in common, so that training in one subject might very well be made effective in the other. Other experiments in correlation between various studies have been carried on with various results, none of them, however, furnishing any conclusive evidence in favor of or against the possibility of transfer.

I have reserved for consideration until the last, one of the most extensive and important series of experiments relating to the question of transfer of training<sup>16</sup>, namely those of Ebert and Meumann. These tests, though with a greatly improved technique and with a larger number of subjects, are in general like the pioneer investigations conducted by James. The results, however, are decidedly different and the conclusions arrived at by Meumann are on the whole at variance with those of James. At the beginning of the Meumann tests, the memories of the subjects were determined for nonsense syllables, numbers, let-

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<sup>15</sup>Correlation of efficiency in mathematics and efficiency in other subjects. *The University of Illinois Studies*, Vol. VI, No. 10, (1908).

<sup>16</sup>*Arch. f. d. gesamte Psychol.*, Vol. IV.

ters, one-syllabled substantives, Italian words, poetic words, prose words, and visual signs. In the training series which followed, the subjects were given nonsense syllables to memorize and then the original test series was repeated to determine improvement, if any, both for immediate recall and for permanent retention. In some cases the experiment was carried still farther, a second training series followed by another test series being introduced. The special training with nonsense syllables evidently increased the ability of the subjects to memorize and retain the materials of the test series. The amount of the transfer was found to be great. The ability to memorize philosophic prose, for example, showed an increase of 70 per cent after the practice series, and to memorize visual signs, 55 per cent. Ebert and Meumann consider that increased power of attending, increase in voluntary effort, improvement in the technique of learning and general decrease in discomfort and tediousness are the chief auxiliary causes for the improvement after practice. They believe, however, that beyond these conditions and fundamental to the process of transfer, lies a sympathetic interaction of allied memory functions, based on an assumed psychophysical activity. The existence of such an uncertain relationship is denied by the reviewers of this piece of work. Both Müller and Dearborn, who have criticized these experiments, believe that the transfer can be best explained by considering the so-called auxiliary aids as the *sole cause* of the results obtained. Be this as it may, Ebert and Meumann, experienced investigators of high standing, have found that so mechanical a procedure as memorizing nonsense syllables has a pronounced effect on learning in general. Whatever the explanation may be, the results seem beyond reasonable dispute, both on account of the ability of the investigators and the unequivocal nature of their findings.

I have spent, perhaps, an undue amount of time in attempting to present the above experimental evidence. It has been my wish, however, to avoid as much as possible, speculation, hypothesis, and conjecture, and get down to the basis of undoubted facts. There can be no dispute, I think, in regard to the significance of these facts. *Transfer is indicated in practically all of the experiments, and in some, particularly in the last described, this transfer is striking.* The only investigations which showed no transfer were those of James, performed admittedly under unsatisfactory conditions, and the tests of Bagley in the Montana Normal



School. Bagley's experiments, however, when continued under somewhat different conditions, as conducted by Ruediger, show clear evidence of transfer. Of the remaining important experiments those of Thorndike show the least positive result.<sup>17</sup>

I take it that in the light of all the evidence there cannot be the slightest doubt that practice effects may be, and generally are, transferred from one set of activities to another. The extent of such transfer and the conditions under which it takes place are, however, matters for further investigation and of great pedagogical significance. Whether the results are due to transfer of identical elements (Thorndike); to improvement of habitual methods of recording facts (James); to training the attention and will-power (Scripture and Davis); to divesting the essential process of the unessential factors, greater habituation and more economical adaptation of attention (Coover and Angell); to the effective use of mental imagery and properly controlled attention (Franker); to the development of ideals (Bagley and Ruediger); to general improvement in technique of learning, attention and will-power, but chiefly to a sympathetic interaction of allied memory functions (Ebert and Meumann), or to some other factors as yet not analyzed out, may still be a matter of investigation and debate. My own personal opinion is that practically all of these are more or less important elements in the transfer.

### III. RECENT THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS RELATING TO THE PROBLEM.

Among recent theoretical discussions of the question of transfer of training may be mentioned, first a symposium on formal discipline by Professor J. R. Angell of the University of Chicago; Professor W. B. Pillsbury of the University of Michigan, and Professor C. H. Judd of the University of Chicago. This symposium was given at a meeting of the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club in Ann Arbor, April 2, 1908, and subsequently published in the *Educational Review* for June 1908.

Angell summarized his discussion as follows: (1) Certain

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<sup>17</sup>Wallin reports in the March number of the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* for the current year that practice with one eye in illusions of reversible perspective is clearly transferred to the unpracticed eye; likewise practice effects are transferred from the fovea to the peripheral retina.

habits gained in the mastery of one study may be appropriated directly in another; they may (2) be slightly modified before such application, and still show for their possessor a great gain as compared with the individual who has to start from the beginning. (3) These habits may be incorporated in larger habit groups either with or without slight modification. (4) They may tend to impede certain antagonistic habits, and in turn be impeded by other previously extant and inhibitory habits. (5) But in all these cases, the instances of inhibition as well as those of reinforcement and incorporation, it seems probable that a certain gain in the power to use and sustain attention will accrue from any purposeful and persistent intellectual application \* \* \*

(6) What subjects best reinforce one another; what ones most inevitably conflict with one another; whether these relations are dependent upon the mode of presentation, rather than upon the subject-matter itself, these and other similar questions, too numerous to point out, must one and all be answered by experiment and experience. Dogmatism is wholly impossible in advance of such drastic and exhaustive investigation".

Pillsbury concludes that "with memory, in the usual logical learning the factors involved are in a large measure common to memories of all related subjects. You can not be sure that any fact is absolutely unrelated to any other, and so far as they are related, learning the one makes easier learning the other. \* \* \*

\* \* Training one part thus trains related parts, and the whole in some degree \* \* \* \* \* So the man with well-rounded training is probably on the average better trained for learning in any field than the untrained man, or even than the man with a narrow education in any other field."

Judd concludes his paper as follows:

"Does nature-study train in observation? Does washing of slates train in neatness? Does saying good-morning to the principal conduce to good manner on the playground? If there is any dogmatic answer given you when you ask these questions, put it aside. There is no single answer to any one of these questions \* \* \* \* \* We may make our pupils eager seekers after truth, or we may make them bigoted little dogmatists. What we do will depend very much upon what we and our interests are. If we believe in specialized functions we shall probably do very little to generalize knowledge in our students. If, on the other hand, we have broad views of the subject we are teaching and of



our task in teaching it, we shall find very little in practical experience to bind us to the narrow view that mental life is made up of watertight compartments”.

A second symposium on formal discipline by Professors E. B. Delabarre, E. N. Henderson and H. H. Horne, was presented before the Brown University Teachers' Association at Providence, April 3, 1909 and published in *Education* for May of the same year. Professor Delabarre in his article distinguishes between the content, and the formal aspects of consciousness and maintains that “no individual can, by his own unaided efforts, acquire any large number of essentially reliable forms”. No one can enumerate all the important formal elements. “It must be a part of the task of educational theory to learn what they are; to distinguish between those that are desirable and true and those that are unreliable”. The writer concludes that “these formal elements can be taught; that one subject unquestionably helps in the learning of others; that there are disciplinary subjects that are of especial value for this purpose; that not only does good training in any subject improve methods of learning, of attention, of work, of comprehension; but it is also true that all knowledge possesses some elements in common and the number of these may be very considerable even in the case of subjects that appear at first sight little related”.

Henderson in his discussion reviews the experimental work on the transfer of training, and concludes that it is difficult to determine whether discipline in form or discipline in content is more valuable. Training in each is possible.

Horne in his discussion maintains that “present study helps us in the later situation in so far as common features are involved. \* \* \* \* There are no subjects which give an ‘all round mental training’, for no such training is possible”.

Professor Alexander Meikeljohn in a paper read before the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools at Boston University, October 9, 1908, and published in the *Educational Review* for February 1909, approaches the problem of formal discipline from the standpoint of the logician. He defines formal training as “discipline in certain discoverable forms of intellectual activity. It does not imply the bad psychology of the faculties, it does imply the thoroughly sound and respectable distinction of form and content which is made by the logician”. The writer concludes that “it is one of the tasks of education to so

train the mind that it may do well the work of thinking. In order to accomplish this, it must select those kinds of mental activity which seem most fundamental and important for the life of the student”.

W. O. Ruediger in a recent volume on the Principles of Education, devotes considerable space to the discussion of formal discipline. While not taking a positive position either for or against transfer of training, he maintains that the evidence deduced concerning such transfer “does not argue for an independence and discreteness of mental functions, but for an interdependence and interrelation of such functions. This being true, we should expect not only that one function will assist another somewhat related function, but that under different conditions the first would interfere with the second. \* \* \* \* \* The channels through which improvement is carried from one mental function to another may apparently all be grouped together under the head of ‘identical elements’ \* \* \* \* \* As a means of transfer this is easily comprehensible and removes all mystery from the process. It, however, is frequently difficult to tell when two processes are mentally identical, and when they are not. An apparent resemblance or divergence may prove misleading when subjected to test \* \* \* \* \* If we have analyzed the doctrine of formal discipline correctly, it is evident that its extreme advocates, and its extreme opponents are both wrong. Knowledge and training are not merely specific in their application, but they also have a general value”.

The various writers above cited in general find no little value in a modified statement of the dogma of formal discipline. W. H. Heck, on the other hand, in a recently published monograph on “Mental Discipline and Educational Values” takes an opposite position, although not denying the clearly established fact of transfer of training. Heck believes that the doctrine of formal discipline is at present doing much harm in educational theory and practice, and he gives as the main purpose of his essay the effort to modify the doctrine, and “upon a modification, to establish a standard of educational values”. The doctrine “continues to make itself felt throughout our school system and \* \* \* the opposition to it is disorganized, timid and bookish”, asserts the writer in his introductory chapter, but later on he says that there is a “popular demand for more practical” courses in schools \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* The doctrine of formal discipline is retiring from the ele-



mentary schools, and is showing signs of increasing discomfort in the secondary schools". Further, "the adherents of the doctrine of formal discipline shrink from carrying their doctrine to its logical conclusions", while "the business and professional world relies more and more on the superiority of specialized ability resulting from specialized training. Men are thereby becoming more efficient specialized workers, but less adaptable, less transferable, more dependent upon the specialized demand for their work."

The "timid opposition" to the dogma of formal discipline does not seem to be so ineffectual as the writer at first would lead us to believe. Indeed, from his own statement of conditions, it seems legitimate to inquire whether in the theoretical and practical reaction against the dogma of formal discipline, we have not already gone too far in the opposite direction. Are we not at present confronted rather by the danger of giving up our ideas of a general education, and becoming adherents of the *dogma of specific training*?

Heck in his arguments against the doctrine of formal discipline does not attempt in the light of the experimental evidence which he reviews, to deny the possibility of transfer. He rather tries to show that this result is not brought about through the transfer of skill in a specific activity or ability, but by the development of general concepts of methods which may be applied to various situations and by the employment of common elements in various specific activities.

Thus the writer is in substantial agreement with the conclusions reached by several investigators cited above; yet the general impression he conveys is that the whole present attitude in regard to the possibility of formal training is wrong and dangerous. It should, however, be remembered that while many who still hold to a belief in transfer of training do so from the standpoint of an exploded psychological theory, and that while it is extremely important to determine the exact nature of the transfer process from the standpoint of psychological theory, this determination is of relatively less significance from the standpoint of educational practice. The essential fact remains for the educator to consider that *training in one activity does help the performance of other activities*. For this reason it would be a great misfortune to convey the belief generally that because the doctrine of formal discipline may be wrong in certain of its theoretical aspects, the prac-

tical effect of learning in one field upon learning in another is *nil*. Such a belief would do more harm to educational theory and practice than any number of academic psychological heresies (even that of the old "faculty psychology") could possibly effect.

Heck's chief arguments against formal discipline are based not on experimental evidence, but on certain theoretical assumptions. In the first place, he overstates the doctrine of formal discipline as it would be held today by any one whose opinion is of value or influence.

"The doctrine of formal discipline implies that the mind is made up or possessed of certain general powers or faculties. . . . Development in strength, breadth, accuracy, etc., of the power involved can be used in response to any other stimulus than the one by which the power was previously exercised, with little change in nature or diminution in amount."

In the first place, no one will attempt to say in any undetermined case whether the exchange by transfer shall be slight or large, and further as a matter of fact the much abhorred "faculty psychology" of our fathers is not basal to a belief in the transfer of mental training. Naturally when the doctrine was first formulated, it was stated in terms of the psychology then current. It could have been stated in terms of up-to-date functional psychology almost as well. This seems to be the common mistake that the opponents of transfer generally make, namely the assumption that because the doctrine of formal discipline first appeared in the setting of the faculty psychology, it must of necessity be invalidated with the passing of that psychology. With equal justification from logic, one might argue that because the belief in heaven was originally coupled with the old Ptolemaic conception of the universe, this belief was destroyed when the Copernican system superseded the older cosmological ideas.

A second theoretical objection which Heck finds to the doctrine of formal discipline is that it is not compatible with the current theories of localization of nervous function. Heck holds that "for every particular state of consciousness there is a concomitant stimulation of particular groups of cells in the cerebral cortex." In other words, he seems to adopt a theory of absolute localization, although he recognizes the fact that "cortical activity is not limited to these particular groups of cells in relation to a particular state of consciousness, for consciousness at



any moment is related to an equilibrium of activity in the cortex as a whole."

Heck appears to be here on the horns of a dilemma. If he denies the possibility of formal discipline on the ground of a narrowly interpreted theory of nervous localization, he is basing his contention on a hypothesis that not only has behind it no verifiable facts, but also is in conflict with what is known concerning the nature of conscious processes. If, on the other hand, we accept a view of relative localization, which more nearly accords with the known neurological facts, and with the activities of consciousness, there is nothing in this latter view which precludes the possibility of a very general transfer of practice effects. In short, if we try to overthrow the doctrine of transfer on the ground of absolute localization of nervous functions, we are doing so on dubious theoretical grounds and holding to a theory which runs counter to what we know of mental elements and mental organization. If, on the other hand, we accept the doctrine of relative rather than absolute localization, of colligation of remote functional areas, and of vicarious functioning (as does Wundt), we find that such an hypothesis, instead of making against the possibility of transfer, gives a clear basis and reason for such transfer. Indeed, a rational hypothesis of cerebral localization suggests coöperation and transfer of the widest possible sort.

In the third place, Heck bases his opposition to the doctrine of formal discipline on the assertion, so commonly made, that habits are specific and that a generalized habit is impossible. This point of view is so generally accepted and its theoretical and practical bearings so important that I have devoted a special and practical bearings are so important that I have devoted a special section in this discussion to the consideration of the question.

#### IV. THE POSSIBILITIES OF FORMING A GENERALIZED HABIT.

Those who deny the possibility of a "generalized" habit assert that habit by its very nature must be specific. As Bagley puts it, "A simple habit is a specific response to a specific stimulus; a generalized habit would be a specific response to a number of different stimuli." As such, "the term is a psychological absurdity." In a similar vein Thorndike asserts that "the mind is on its dynamic side a machine for making *particular reactions to particular situations*. It works in great detail, adapting itself to

*special* data of which it has had experience." The case seems very simple. A habit is a definite response to a definite stimulus, and as all training tends to the formation of habits, there can be no training that is not specific. This line of reasoning might seem all very well if it did not prove too much. If habit is of this decidedly specific character, then it would seem to follow of necessity that the aim of the process of learning is merely to make facile and subconscious those things which have already been done after a fashion, and not to prepare the individual properly to react to essentially new situations. If this were the case we should be in a sorry plight indeed. We should be obliged to revise all our former notions of an education, and substitute for our present procedure a narrow and illiberal training, habituating the pupil to a limited sphere of predetermined activities. The child would be but little better off, then, in his learning processes than is the brute, who manifestly is trained in just such a manner as described and in no sense educated. Thorndike attempts to escape from this obvious difficulty by admitting the transfer of training through elements identical in two situations.

Such a transfer in the simplest form is well illustrated by a series of experiments carried on several years ago in the psychological laboratory of the University of Illinois. In these experiments three dogs, among other animals, were tested in regard to their ability to discriminate between various colors. Throughout most of the experiments a standard red was the color which they were trained to associate with the obtaining of food. This color was painted on the food-box, and the dogs soon formed the habit of reacting directly to this red-box stimulus, thus obtaining their food. Later one of the dogs was tested to see how far he could associate the color red when presented not merely on a box of a certain size and appearance but on various receptacles and under various conditions, with the obtaining of food. Gradually this dog was trained to recognize the color red, when thus presented, as the food signal. Thus, quite mechanically, he seems to have transferred his habit from one situation to another through the identity of the color element in the various situations. Such a transfer is not of a high type, nor is it very promising from the standpoint of educational procedure. The possibilities of getting much general training through the identity of objective elements in a total situation do not seem to be great. It should be stated, however, that Thorndike understands by identical elements not

only identity of objective stimulus as in the case of the food-box stimulus, but the identity of those elements that constitute the reaction to a stimulus, the identity of adjustment in two situations.

Bagley has avoided the difficulty by emphasizing the identity or similarity of certain subjective elements in a situation (indeed he would define a situation in terms of conscious meaning rather than in terms of objective elements) in his doctrine of a transfer through the creation of ideals. He says in regard to the habit of neatness, for example, that "those who appear to carry this habit over from one department of life to another really carry over the ideal of neatness." The importance of this general principle, thus formulated by Bagley, cannot be overestimated, yet I am inclined to believe that neither this, nor the principle of identical elements as set forth by Thorndike is sufficient to explain all there is in the transfer, nor to exhaust the possibilities of a general training.

In several senses I believe that we are warranted in speaking of a generalized habit. Such an expression seems to me admissible under the following conditions:

(1.) When the specific stimulus that calls forth a specific reaction is common to a large variety of situations, which situations may have little in common beyond the presence in each of the specific stimulus. In the case of the food-box reaction, for example, described above the color red was the element in many situations which produced under varying circumstances the food-seeking response. Such a reaction would be general in the sense that it could take place under many objective conditions, and thus as far as the environment is concerned, constitute a generalized response through the similarity or identity of a single element in that environment. Take another example of a similar sort: The soldier who has learned to come to attention at the word of command will do so on the parade ground, the battlefield, or the street. It, of course, may be said that for the soldier who so responds the actual situation is the same under these varying conditions. However, this is true only as far as the dominant element in the situation remains similar, this dominant element being determined not by its objective importance to the ordinary observer, but by the fact that the soldier does thus react under various circumstances (the reaction thus being the criterion of identity of stimulus). For the ordinary observer, however, this dominant



element may be of but slight importance, and thus in his relations with his fellowmen, the soldier may appear to have acquired a generalized habit, and for all practical purposes his reaction may be treated as such.

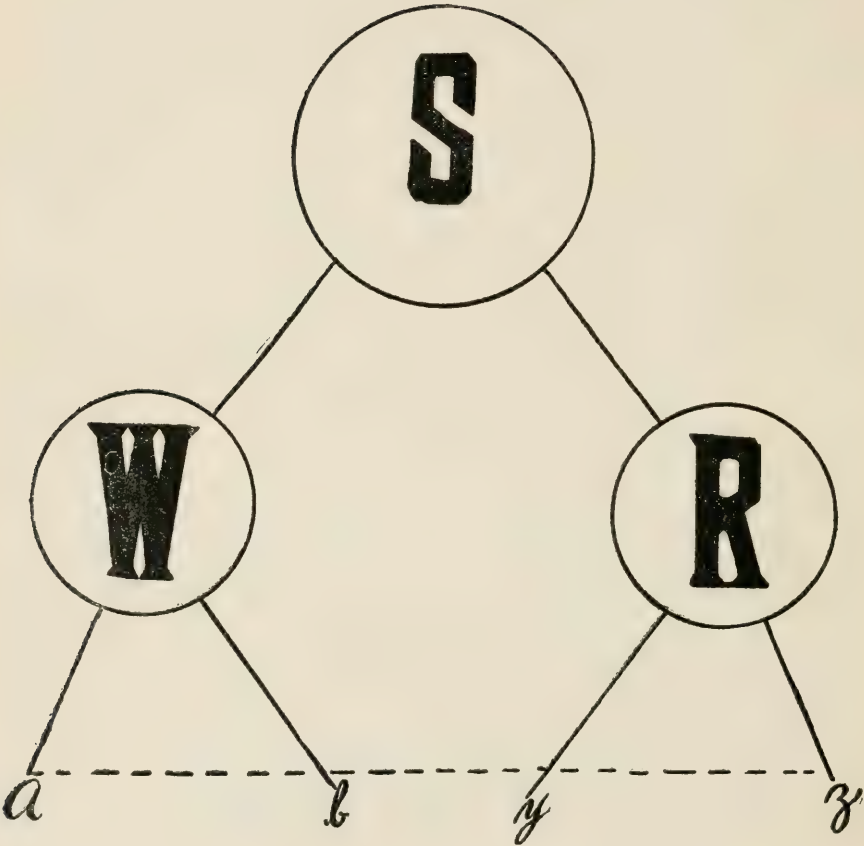
(2.) There is another class of habitual reactions which do not seem to be called forth by any definite objective stimulus, but which appear under a large variety of objective conditions in which no single common element can be found. These latter cases arise when the reaction is under the dominance of a mood or emotion that so colors the objective environment that several different stimuli may call forth the habitual response. A person, for example, of a choleric disposition may have established a very definite set of reactions which habitually expresses his angry moods. The insignificant external causes which set off this definite response may vary greatly, and it may thus be urged, that not one stimulus, but many, are capable of producing the reaction. In cases of morbid pity, irrational fear, religious enthusiasm, and the like, the object which gives expression to these moods is apparently indifferent. Of course it may be replied that the mood itself is due to a complex of bodily stimuli (such as those set forth in the James-Lange theory of the emotions) and the facts are that in all the habitual expressions of the emotions there exist certain common and definite stimuli discharging themselves into the higher centers, and that this second class of habitual responses really belongs with the first class, namely, of response to identical stimuli. Whether this is theoretically true or not, we again have, and to a greater extent than in the cases cited under the first class, what may be practically considered as a very general response to a large number of different environmental conditions.

(3.) We further have in any definite reaction to a given situation not merely one elemental adjustment, but generally many both positive and negative. This the following discussion will attempt to make clear:

Let us suppose that a child in the school room is being taught to correctly form the letter *a* in his copy book. Here we have the example of training in a special habit. We have a certain definite stimulus of sight, namely the letter *a* of the copy book, which constitutes the essential stimulus to which there is a specific response, the writing of the letter *a*. This gradually becomes more and more an habitual process and we have set up a definite habit

of stimulus and response. I wish to submit, however, that besides this specific stimulus of the written or printed *a* on the copy book, there are other stimuli which constitute the total situation, which stimuli might function just as well for copying *b*, or any other letter, as *a*. We have not merely the specific *a*-copying reaction, but we have as well a more general reaction based on the seeing of the copy book, the "feel" of the pen in the hand, etc., which may be termed the "copy-book" reaction; beyond this we have a still more general group of motor expressions and inhibitions which constitute the "school" reaction as such and differentiate it from the "home" reaction, for example. Now, in the copying of the letter *a* all these various reactions are involved, but only a very small part of the total reaction functions solely for the *a*-copying habit; much of it might function equally well for the reading habit, or the number-work habit. There is then a considerable part of the *a*-copying habit that is not specific in the sense that it is confined to the one particular reaction of copying the *a*. It is general in the sense that it concerns itself with many other school activities. For example, the ignoring of the noises on the street, the holding of the body in the proper position at the desk, etc., are reactions that apply to various school situations other than the one concerned with the business of copying the *a*.

Perhaps this thought may be made more clear by the accompanying diagram. In this the script letters *a*, *b*, *y*, *z*, represent certain specific activities in which the pupil is being trained. *a*, however, involves the more general adjustment *W*, which in turn involves the still more general adjustment *S*. Now while in the activity *a*, *W* and *S* are both involved, these may also be involved equally well in still other activities. For example, *W* is involved among other things in the activity *b*, while *S* is involved not only in *W*, but in *R* as well. To be more concrete, let us suppose that *a* represents the *a*-copying habit, and *W* the writing habit and *S* the school habit, while *R* represents the reading habit and *y* the habit of reading a verse. Now it is quite obvious that in learning to copy *a*, the other higher habits, if they have not already been formed, will of necessity gradually be set up. Suppose the child should begin his activities in school (which of course, he actually would not) by learning to copy the letter *a*. In this activity he would gradually acquire the more fundamental habit of paying attention in the school room and of the general technique of learning to write. Thus in learning to copy the *a*, he would





have also acquired a stock of habits which could be transferred to other school situations. In other words, learning to copy *a* would constitute a general training as well as a specific habit-forming activity.

So we are justified in speaking of general habits of attending, or of thinking, or of willing, although as Bagley would urge with justice, attention, thought, and resolution are mental states, which as highly conscious, raise the individual above the plane of habitual activities, and make it possible for him to respond in a new way to a new situation. The fact, however, that he does attend, has the attitude of attention, is due to certain specific tendencies toward reaction which have been gradually acquired and made reflex. The attending to the dictation of the teacher, for example, brings into the consciousness of the child a situation to which he may intelligently react, but the possibility of getting the attitude of this attention is largely dependent on many subconscious and habitual factors, such as ignoring unessential stimuli, disregarding tedium, and in general having developed a technique of learning. These elements have been emphasized by most of the investigators above cited as essential in the process of transfer.

If we consider again the diagram just discussed we shall be able to see how it explains some of the facts of transfer or its lack, as shown in investigations above considered.

In one of the tests of Thorndike, for example, the subjects were given practice in marking the words on a printed page containing the two letters *e* and *s*. Before and after this training these subjects were tested in marking the words containing other combinations of letters, misspelled words, different parts of speech, etc. Improvement in the second test series was measured by increased speed and accuracy. In general speed was more likely to be improved than accuracy. The reason for this I think is perfectly obvious in terms of our diagram, as can be seen from the following: Suppose that *a* represents the practice in marking the words containing *e* and *s*, while *b* represents the marking of words containing the other letters, etc. It is quite obvious that the specific marking habit acquired in the first series enters into conflict in a certain sense with the marking of words containing *m* and *l*, for example, since the attention is turned from words of one general make-up in the practice series to those of another composition, in the test series. Thus the acquired tendency to mark words containing *e* and *s* will actually tend to inhibit the marking

of words containing *m* and *l*. Hence there may be a falling off in accuracy. On the other hand, the more general reaction of marking words has been trained at the same time as the habit of marking specific words. This latter phase of the habit (which Thorndike would term an identical element, but which I prefer to call a more general attitude) may be transferred from the marking of one kind of word to the other. This might result in greater speed and at the same time diminished accuracy. I venture to say that if a subject had been trained to high efficiency in the word-marking habit, further training in marking certain specific words would tend to exercise a negative influence in marking other words similar to them. The nearer the activities were alike in this case, the greater would be the distraction of attention, and the greater the falling off in efficiency.

It would seem probable for this reason that highly trained laboratory subjects would show less general effect of training than would naive subjects, and that adults would show less effect than would children. The laboratory subject who has mastered the technique of giving himself over to the test at hand, who knows how to hold his attention down to the minimum of fluctuation and to overcome the loss of interest arising through ennui, can expect to get little general training in carrying on such a specific activity as judging areas, tapping at dots on paper, or learning nonsense syllables. The greatest possibilities of transferring general attitudes of attention, thinking, etc., except as conscious ideals or purposes, lie, then, with untrained adults and with children, especially with the latter. This makes the educative process so hopeful where children are concerned and relatively hopeless with adults. It is not that adults cannot learn new habits, as James maintains in his famous chapter on habit; it is that they cannot generalize these habits, that makes the man of forty an old fogey.

Transfer of training is then possible in the ways indicated: (1) Where a single element to which a specific response is made functions under various environmental conditions because it is a common element in these various, and otherwise to a greater or less degree, dissimilar environments; (2) When a dominant mood or emotion so colors various environments that a characteristic response is obtained without identity of any objective condition; (3) Where a single response in reality involves other and more general adjustments; (4) It is also possible, as Bagley suggests,

through making the end of the activity a clearly conscious ideal. In this case the transfer takes place by a direct carrying over by consciousness not of the activity itself, but of the purpose of the activity, to another field. This transfer may be represented in the diagram by the dotted lines from *a* to *b*, from *a* to *c*, and so on, showing a direct transfer without involving the adjustments at *W*, *S*, or *R*. To illustrate by a concrete example, the habit of attention in school (*S*) may function quite unconsciously, from having been acquired in the reading of poetry (*y*); in connection with the writing of certain letters in the copy-book (*b*), or it may function rather because the school-attention attitude has been made a conscious ideal in connection with *y* and is therefore carried over as an end of action rather than as a habit. This general scheme with this modification suggests, I believe, all the possibilities of transfer; general moods and attitudes that have grown up quite unconsciously as well as developed conscious purposes finding their place in the transfer. Whether beyond this there is some mysterious sort of harmony, or sympathetic vibration, in the nervous system that makes it possible for one habit to set up another without a transfer in the ways suggested, we do not know. But if it exists it is buried at present so far below the threshold of consciousness that it has no practical educational significance and need not be considered here.

## V. RULES FOR SECURING TRANSFER.

The possibility of a general training is thus seemingly established both in theory and in fact, and it becomes the business of education to consider how such a training can best be secured. I believe that it is possible in the light of all the evidence presented on the subject of transfer to lay down with tolerable certainty a few rules of procedure.

(1). The first rule should be: Make those specific activities which you wish to transfer the object of thought. Let the significance of the habit and its general bearings become known to the person who is the subject of the training. Bagley has emphasized this factor in training in his doctrine of transference through ideals, and the experiments of Ruediger seem to justify the contention. The results of Judd, who, as previously stated, has shown that practice with knowledge has a value in the transfer of training which practice without knowledge does not pos-



sess, also point to the same general conclusion. Likewise, Meumann has found that it is desirable in training children formally to bring to their attention the significance of such training. It further should be said that our knowledge of the functioning of the nervous system is in strict accord with this general position in regard to transfer, since the association fibres of the cortex are the ones which connect various sensory and motor areas and their function is probably primarily related to the higher conscious processes.

It would seem then that we have a definite means which education can pursue in formal training and this means removes the criticism that such training is merely mechanical and deadening.

(2). Train the child in the technique of learning and in the processes that make learning effective and economical. Nearly all the investigations emphasize the value of properly adapted attention, of satisfactory physical and mental attitudes in securing transfer. Sustained attention should be developed in the school training, not merely for the sake of the object attended to (perhaps not primarily for the object's sake), but rather for the sake of attention itself. The whole art of learning should be carefully and skillfully controlled. The importance of right methods of learning has been emphasized in recent years largely through the work of Meumann. It appears that one of the chief aims of education should be to teach the child how to acquire knowledge with the least expenditure of time and energy compatible with its retention for effective use. Personally I am convinced that one of the greatest needs of formal training in this connection is the development of the child's mental imagery. See to it that children can employ various kinds of imagery effectively, develop the imagery for form and for color, the imagery for sounds and for kinaesthetic sensation of throat, hand and fingers when possible. Many a poor reader cannot visualize, many a child deficient in nicety of motor control lacks kinaesthetic imagery; all training in musical notation is worthless knowledge unless the child has fair auditory imagery.

(3). In seeking to secure transfer, especially where purpose does not play an important part, see to it that the stimulus which is to call forth the desired reaction is such that it may be a common element in many objective situations. If, for example, it is desired to promote in general the habit of observation, it will be unwise to cultivate this habit in a very narrow and un-

usual field of experience. Habits of observation may doubtless be secured by training the observer to give careful attention to objects appearing under the microscope. This training in observation will on the whole probably have less possibilities of transfer to other fields than will training in observation cultivated in the study of more common objects of life, such as those of plants and animals that are often met with in the daily environment.

(4). Education should cultivate through specific training general emotional attitudes. Moods and feelings often are the dominant elements in a situation and these can readily be transferred, I believe. The child who has the proper emotional attitude toward his school life will be the one who will act most capably in the school environment. Education should see to it that such general feeling attitudes as docility, respect for authority, eagerness to be of service, and the like are developed through the school training. Such attitudes, unlike the ideals which Bagley emphasizes, need not (perhaps should not) be raised to full consciousness. This, I believe, has a bearing on the moral instruction in the schools. I have sometimes thought that intellectualizing what ought to be an emotional attitude is a dangerous procedure. This thought has significance in relation to temperance instruction and the like. I think that the question may well be raised,—Has not the instruction on the effect of alcohol and narcotics the tendency to make the child's attitude merely a matter of intellect, when it should primarily remain one of feeling and of will?

## VI. THE SUPERIOR DISCIPLINARY VALUE OF PURE AS COMPARED WITH APPLIED SCIENCE.

Finally, if it is true that a formal training is possible, and if it is desirable that the schools furnish such a training, we come back to the old question as to whether there are certain studies that are better suited than others to offer this discipline. It would seem probable that there are subjects which either because of the nature of their subject matter, or because of the better technique that goes with their instruction are today more valuable than others from the standpoint of mental training. Other studies which are not now so well developed will, perhaps, some day take the place of mathematics, or natural science, or foreign

language, but today they are less valuable from a disciplinary standpoint.

Just at present the most important controversy concerning educational values is being carried on between those who advocate the advantages of applied science and those who hold to the greater value of pure science. The proper solution of the relative importance of the two spheres of human knowledge will doubtless have much to do with the development of the most valuable curriculum of studies in our secondary schools and colleges. I am inclined to believe that at least as far as mental discipline is concerned, pure science has much in its favor as a subject of instruction. In a forthcoming volume, Bagley emphasizes the probable superiority of pure mathematics over applied mathematics with its utilitarian ends which tend to color every other consideration; thus obscuring the ideals of accuracy and rigidity that the pure science teaches. "Applied mathematics," says Bagley, "will inevitably demand quantity rather than quality. . . . With the better and more intelligent students, the discipline may come in spite of haste. With the average student, the longer and more penetrating processes from which the perception of the unique values of mathematical reasoning will emerge, will be omitted."

What is true in regard to pure mathematics as compared with applied mathematics is, I believe, true in regard to other pure sciences as compared with other applied sciences. The application of a science tends to emphasize certain human values more or less remote from the value of the science as science; hence, to restrict the field of the inquiry to those phases of the science that seem to relate most definitely to economic and other more or less narrow human values. With this point of view the investigator is apt not only to lose the ideals of rigidity which Bagley points out, but also the ideals of truth merely as truth; truth that is self-sufficient and confident, that knows that whatever is true is human and whatever is untrue or partially true can never have ultimate worth in human experience. This ideal gained in one pure science and made a conscious end of endeavor in all fields of human experience has a rich promise for the future. The great discoveries of science have been made by those who were primarily scientists, who had the scientific ideal. Applied science comes later and uses the knowledge of a Helmholtz playing with the ophthalmoscope, or a Darwin, in the spirit of scientific curiosity collecting specimens and data from which has developed the



theory of evolution with its countless applications to human life. The mere *facts* of science are worth much; relatively less, however, in the first years of study before specialization has begun in the technical school or university; but the fact as fact has slight disciplinary value unless from it grows the spirit of curiosity, the emotional ideal, which the Greeks realized gave birth to all knowledge, and through which modern education has achieved such results. My own conclusions would be that pure science is of greater disciplinary value because (1) through the facts which it presents, ideal of procedure and of truth may be developed which function in a wider human experience, greatly to the uplift of the race; (2) the content and method of pure science is such that it has a broader field of application than has applied science, and can function as an identical or similar element in more situations than can applied science; (3) the emotion which the pure seeking after truth arouse is higher and less likely to be deadened by other emotions than are the ideals of economic improvement and social betterment, which are the aims of an applied science. These latter are apt to conflict with each other and to obscure the greater issue. Truth has but one aim, to know itself; it has a greater emotional uplift and is one of the fundamental passions of the human race; as fundamental as the economic and social needs, and capable of ranges of flight toward the ideal that are denied the other instinctive longings.

We must realize that not every subject that has utilitarian value, or that excites popular interest, is for that reason solely, a fit subject for instruction in the schools. Ultra-conservatism has too often insisted on keeping in the curriculum those studies that have long since ceased to be vital; on the other hand, we are likewise in danger, particularly at the present moment, of going to the other and equally fatal extreme. There are so many special interests that just now seem to be clamoring for recognition, practical, humanitarian, aesthetic, that our school programmes are in danger of being overcrowded with a variety of subjects which cannot well take the place in point of mental training of those which have for years been firmly established in the curriculum. The very multiplicity of the subjects that have enriched our programmes offers a distraction and furnishes a training in dispersed rather than concentrated attention, a training which is not needed and should not be desired. The trend of popular opinion is such that the new must come in, and I am far from maintaining that

this opinion is not on the whole sound ; but let us see to it that this new element is assigned its proper place and given its just value. In this time of rapid change we need sanity in educational doctrine and practice as scarcely ever before.







# SCHOOL *of* EDUCATION

## University of Illinois



The School of Education offers, during the regular University year, courses in principles and history of education, school hygiene, school law, school administration and supervision, secondary education, social phases of education, comparative education, and educational classics.

Through the Department of Psychology, it offers courses general, experimental, genetic, and educational psychology.

In coöperation with other departments of the University, it offers courses in the teaching of the ancient and modern languages, English, history, the biological and physical sciences.

In coöperation with the College of Agriculture, it trains teachers of agriculture and household science for the elementary and secondary schools.

It offers *graduate work* in the principles and history of education, in school organization and supervision, and in *the history and organization of industrial education*. A secondary school enrolling over three hundred pupils is open to properly qualified graduate students for purposes of investigating problems of classroom teaching and the organization of subject-matter.

It offers courses in *practice-teaching* open to students of graduate and senior standing, and involving either one or two semesters of actual teaching, five hours each week, under competent supervision.

During the Summer Session (June 20th to August 19th, 1910), courses are offered in the principles and theory of education, educational values, high-school administration, general school administration, technique of secondary teaching including class management, history of industrial education, and (at the Biological Station at Havana) courses in elementary and secondary teaching of biology.

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